

Claims 1 and 2 (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) The chest protector of Claim 2 ~~6~~ wherein said raised impact-absorbing surfaces have a surface area configured for receiving the impact of the projectile, said surface areas of said plurality of raised impact-absorbing surfaces incrementally decreasing in size from an upper portion of said main portion to lower portion of said main portion.

Claims 4 and 5 (cancelled)

6. (currently amended) ~~The chest protector of Claim 4~~ A chest protector for absorbing impacts to the body of an athlete from a projectile, comprising a main portion for substantially overlying the chest and abdomen of the athlete, said main portion defining an upper portion and a lower portion,

said main portion having a variable thickness ranging from a thicker said upper portion and a thinner said lower portion such that said lower portion is more flexible than said upper portion,

wherein said main portion comprises a plurality of substantially channel-shaped fold lines intersecting with one another to define a plurality of raised impact-absorbing surfaces therebetween,

wherein said raised impact-absorbing surfaces have a surface area configured for receiving the impact of the projectile, said surface areas of said plurality of raised impact-absorbing surfaces incrementally decreasing in size laterally from a center area of said main portion to vertical side edges of said main portion,

wherein each said raised impact-absorbing surface is defined by an upper surface portion and a lower surface portion, said upper surface portion having a greater height relative to said lower surface portion, and said upper surface portion and said lower surface portion merging into one another to define a downward-deflecting surface therebetween, said downward-deflecting surface angled relative said upper and lower portions to direct the projectile downward when the projectile impacts said raised impact-absorbing areas.

7. (new) A chest protector comprising a plurality of raised impact-absorbing surfaces, each of the raised impact-absorbing surfaces with a downward-deflecting angled surface between an upper surface portion and a lower surface portion thereof.

8. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7 having an upper portion and a lower portion, the impact-absorbing surfaces of the chest protector being thicker in the upper portion and thinner in the lower portion.

9. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7 further comprising a plurality of substantially channel-shaped fold lines intersecting with one another to define the plurality of impact-absorbing surfaces therebetween.

10. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, wherein the impact-absorbing surfaces have a surface area configured for receiving the impact of a projectile, the surface areas of the plurality of impact-absorbing surfaces incrementally decreasing in size from the upper portion to the lower portion of the chest protector.

11. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, wherein the impact-absorbing surfaces have a surface area configured for receiving the impact of a projectile, the surface areas of the plurality of impact-absorbing surfaces incrementally decreasing in size laterally from a center area of the chest protector to side edges of the chest protector.

12. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, wherein the downward-deflecting angled surface of the impact-absorbing surfaces are for directing a projectile downward when the chest protector is impacted by the projectile.

13. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, wherein the upper surface portion of an impact-absorbing surface has a greater height relative to the lower surface portion.

14. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, wherein said chest protector is substantially non-elastic.

15. (new) The chest protector of Claim 7, the chest protector for absorbing impacts to the body of an athlete from a projectile, and further comprising:

a main portion for substantially overlaying the chest and abdomen of the athlete; and

a pair of wing portions detachably secured to the main portion, each wing portion configured to overlay the sides and lower back portion of the athlete to facilitate a continuous form-fit.

16. (new) The chest protector of Claim 15, further comprising a plurality of adjustable straps coupled to the main portion, the straps adjusted to at least partially overlap the wing

portions when the chest protector is worn and the straps tensioning the wing portions toward each other to maintain the form fit.

17. (new) The chest protector of Claim 15, wherein the wing portions are detachably secured to a back of the main portion.